

Message Text

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14
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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R 291556Z OCT 76
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2867
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
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AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USBERLIN
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C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 18303

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, EAIR, UK, WB
SUBJ: CIVAIR: BRITISH AIRWAYS OFFICE IN EAST BERLIN

REF: (A) STATE 260141; (B) LONDON 17125

1. AT TRIPARTITE CAA MEETING OCTOBER 26, US CAA
MADE POINTS IN PARA 2, REFTEL A. UK CAA HANLEY
REPLIED VERY MUCH ALONG LINES OF FCO COMMENTS REPORTED
REF B.

2. HANLEY SAID PURPOSES OF OFFICE WERE:

A) TO PROMOTE LONG-HAUL TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN
BA AND INTERFLUG;

B) TO CARRY OUT GENERAL AGENCY AGREEMENT; AND

C) TO FACILITATE TRAFFIC FROM UK TO LEIPZIG FOR
ANNUAL LEIPZIG FAIR.

3. HANLEY SAID HE HAD SPECIFICALLY REQUESTED AND
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RECEIVED ASSURANCES FROM UK AUTHORITIES THAT THERE WAS

NO INTENTION WHATEVER TO INAUGURATE ANY TRAFFIC INTO OR OUT OF SCHOENEFELD IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.

4. HANLEY REPORTED THAT HMG WAS "NOT TOO KEEN, BUT HAD NO GROUNDS FOR OBJECTING" TO BA PLANS. HE SAID REPEATEDLY THAT IT WAS A PURELY COMMERCIAL EXERCISE AND EMPHASIZED THAT OFFICE WOULD BE VERY SMALL, STAFFED BY ONE MAN AND HIS WIFE.

5. HANLEY CONFIRMED STATEMENT IN REFTEL C THAT BA HAD INTENDED TO PREPARE THE GROUND WITH APPROPRIATE PR EFFORTS IN ADVANCE, BUT THAT STORY HAD LEAKED PREMATURELY. HANLEY ALSO SAID HE UNDERSTOOD KLM AND/OR SAS ALREADY HAD OFFICES IN EAST BERLIN.

6. COMMENT: IN LIGHT OF REFTELS, EMBASSY BELIEVES WE HAVE ACHIEVED OUR GOAL OF ALERTING UK TO OUR CONCERN RE POSSIBLE EFFECT ON WEST BERLIN AIR TRAFFIC OF ESTABLISHMENT OF BA OFFICE IN EAST BERLIN. WE HOPE THAT, AS A RESULT, UK WILL KEEP TIGHT REIN ON BA ACTIVITIES IN GDR. FOR TIME BEING, THIS SEEMS TO BE MOST WE CAN EXPECT TO ACCOMPLISH. HOWEVER, WE AGREE WITH EMBASSY LONDON THAT HMG'S SELECTIVE BLINDNESS TO POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF AIRLINE ACTIVITY IN BERLIN, I.E., WHEN THERE IS COMMERCIAL ADVANTAGE IN SUCH OPAQUENESS, IS DISTURBING. ANOTHER CURRENT EXAMPLE, OF COURSE, IS THE UK ATTEMPT TO CUT PANAM OUT OF THE BERLIN-LONDON CHARTER MARKET. WE WOULD FAVOR LETTING HMG KNOW THAT WE TAKE A DIM VIEW OF THEIR DECISION THAT THEY HAD NO GROUNDS FOR OBJECTING TO BA'S OPENING OF AN OFFICE IN EAST BERLIN. STOESSEL

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